

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CHAMBLISS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ABERCROMBIE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE E-RATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, here in this Chamber we just finished bidding farewell to our pages, young men and women from around the country who had an opportunity to expand their horizons serving in our Nation's Capital, really being in touch literally around the world. And it is a marvelous experience that they have. We are all pleased that they were able to accommodate it.

But the fact is that we have it in our power today to extend that same rich experience, being connected around the world, to every young person in America, and through our library systems extend it to every American, and the magic of the Internet will provide that worldwide connection.

Today, I call upon the Federal Communications Commission to reject the calls we are hearing from some to delay funding the E-Rate program, to do the right thing by America's schoolchildren and library patrons by providing full funding for the E-Rate.

The Federal Communications Commission is within days of making a decision that can bring the power of the Internet to all of these constituencies. If some telecommunications companies have their way, unfortunately, the Commission would back down in the face of a last-minute campaign of threats and innuendo in an effort to discredit the E-Rate. As a result of this campaign, the full importance of the E-Rate and its potential impact on consumer phone rates really has failed to be heard.

Mr. Speaker, the E-Rate is not a new tax imposed by Congress on an unsuspecting populace. In fact, the E-Rate program was included in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which was passed by a Republican Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support.

As part of that act, added by again a bipartisan initiative that included Senator ROCKEFELLER and Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE, it built upon the Universal Service Fund established in 1934 that was used to help provide access to poor and rural areas for telephone service to

provide an extension of the E-Rate on the same basis.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 extended universal service beyond residential customers to include our schools and libraries, and expanded that service available for universal service beyond simply the plain old telephone service and added access to the Internet. To suggest that this obligation is new seems ludicrous, since the telephone companies have been paying for universal service since 1934.

With these facts in hand, I cannot condone the action on the part of some companies who are adding customer surcharges of up to 5 percent and blaming the E-Rate for increased costs. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 contemplated full payment of the E-Rate by the other cost savings that would be passed on to the telecommunications industry. In fact, the latest research indicates that they have already received far more than the \$2.4 billion that is contemplated.

In my community, Buckman Grade School was the third grade school in the world to have its own web site. It was able to do that by its cadre of dedicated parents with bake sales, spaghetti dinners, but access to the Internet should not be dependent upon bake sales.

We have 30,000 applications now pending from schools and libraries all over the country to give this Internet access. The E-Rate is good for business, it is good for United States global competitiveness, it is important for our central cities and our rural areas. Our schools and libraries are trying to educate tomorrow's leaders with decade-old technological tools far too often.

The E-Rate has a potential of putting all of our young people on the same par with the interns that we just celebrated. It must be supported. Our future depends upon it. I call upon all of my congressional colleagues to raise their voice to the FCC to make sure that the E-Rate is fully funded.

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP NECESSARY TO END SIEGE OF KOSOVA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton recently pledged to Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, President of the Republic of Kosova, that the U.S. would not allow another Bosnia to occur in Kosova. Sadly, another Bosnia has already begun.

Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic is now using the same ethnic cleansing tactics in Kosova that he used in Bosnia, which resulted in 200,000 deaths, 2 million homeless, and billions of dollars in damage to the infrastructure and economy of Bosnia.

The grim specter of Bosnia can now be seen in Kosova and along its border with Albania as tens of thousands of

refugees are streaming across the border. Does that not sound all too familiar?

Refugees tell horror stories of villages that have been attacked by the Serbs and emptied of all Albanian residents. Innocent civilians have been massacred. At least 10 villages have been completely razed and thousands have been made homeless in this latest crackdown by the Milosevic regime.

These events of recent days were preceded by a massive series of Serbian offensives that have killed more than 200 people since the new wave of aggression began in late February. With further cruelty, Belgrade has restricted the supply of humanitarian assistance to defenseless men, women and children, much of it provided by the United States through Mercy Corps International and other international NGOs.

The Serbs have cut telephone lines to the region. They have set up roadblocks to seal off the area. They have prevented international journalists and human rights observers access to the villages. Milosevic is enforcing his own brand of Serbian apartheid on the 90 percent Albanian majority in Kosova.

Incredibly, this terrorism by the Serbs has occurred at the very moment President Rugova and strongman Milosevic have been engaged in weekly meetings arranged by Ambassador Holbrooke to negotiate a so-called peaceful settlement to the Kosova crisis.

Mr. Speaker, the killing in Kosova must stop. I have been to the region to see the situation for myself and I have met with President Rugova to hear firsthand a report on the current intolerable circumstances.

President Clinton must bring greater U.S. efforts to bring the massacre to a standstill as a first step toward resolving this bloody conflict that threatens to destabilize the entire region. The U.S., because of their indecisive leadership and weak demands, are seen as ineffective here even by our allies.

The Contact Group of nations has failed to impress Milosevic with the seriousness of its demands, which tragically have been stated without the muscle to back them up and consequently have been totally ignored.

Mr. Speaker, the only strong leadership that is going to come must come from the presidency. We must have U.S. leadership that will force the Milosevic regime to end its siege of Kosova and we must stop the killing now. Humanity cannot allow another Bosnia to occur in Kosova.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HORN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.